



"The TCs, they are great, they are awesome, they know their stuff... they are very open to just helping us with what we need."

*- Deborah Wampfler, Owner
Deb's Day Care, Waukesha*

"Loving [Child Care] all Over Again."

Child Care Provider Since the Beginning

Deb was 18 when she started working in child care in 1984, and she never looked back. She continued in child care until she married and moved to WI, where she became an assistant Pre-School teacher. Deb got her family child care certification and soon, became licensed. When YoungStar began, Deb took preliminary YoungStar classes but had to close unexpectedly for a few years to care for her husband when he had a stroke. It didn't slow her down for long. Deb got relicensed and with the encouragement of her YoungStar Technical Consultant (TC), started YoungStar again with her family child care, Deb's Day Care. After over 30 years in child care Deb was on board with YoungStar, but wanted to make sure she did it on her terms, staying true to her goals for her program. "It was like okay, here we go, jump in with both feet now," said Deb. She has participated in YoungStar for 3 years now, and her program recently achieved a 5 Star, the highest possible rating a program can receive through YoungStar. "It's been a long wild ride," laughed Deb.

Support Through YoungStar

Deb's TC for the last 2 years, Tiffany Yankowiak of Northwest Connection Family Resources, played a key role in supporting Deb and her program through YoungStar and through other challenges Deb faced in running her program. Tiffany encouraged Deb to move forward with YoungStar and make improvements to her program, despite the fact that Deb's husband was home full-time after his stroke and needed occasional care. Deb said that with TC support she was able to move ahead with her child care and recognize the value in having her husband there as an extra set of hands to read to the children and contribute in other ways to the program's success. "The TCs are great with giving us the verbal and moral support to just let us know what a great job we are doing," noted Deb, adding that her TC's suggestions and ideas for her program were also highly beneficial. Since beginning YoungStar Deb has used her TC's recommendations to rearrange her environments so that they flow more smoothly for children's play, and has used her money from micro-grants to buy additional materials, such as small chairs for the kids, outdoor blocks, baby books, outdoor riding toys and more. "The grant money is definitely nice," admitted Deb.

YoungStar Benefits

After over 30 years in child care Deb still finds joy in her work. "I am in a new transition in my life," said Deb, whose own children have moved out, allowing her to shift her focus more to the children in her care. "I am loving it all over again." Deb wants other child care providers, especially family child care providers like her, to read her story and realize that no matter their situation, they can succeed and benefit through YoungStar while still maintaining the personal goals and uniqueness of their program. "Try it but keep true to yourselves," Deb advised. "Open your minds and your eyes to at least listen and see if something else might work for your program."

Wisconsin's Stars are Shining

YoungStar informs parents, recognizes quality providers and brings resources and support to programs committed to improving quality. But what it's really all about is helping Wisconsin children shine bright.